

SOUTHBURY LAND TRUST, INC.

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February 17, 2009

To: Members of the Appropriations Committee

RE: OPPOSE LOSS OF FARMLAND FUNDING

The Southbury Land Trust, along with land trusts around the state have made it a priority to preserve farmland because we realize how important it is to our communities, to our local economies, to our need for locally grown food, and to our heritage.

Thanks to funding from the Community Investment Act, we've made great progress in preserving important farmland. Now is not the time to cut the program.

With real estate values going down, farmland preservation funding will have significantly greater purchasing power than in recent years.

Eliminating funding and Department of Agriculture staff now will mean that some great deals on farmland will fall through.

Cuts in state farmland funding will also mean that matching funds for as much as \$6 million in available federal money will be lost. Our state, our farmers, and our people can't afford this degree of lost opportunity.

We urge you to keep farmland funding in the budget.

Thank you,

Tom Crider, President
The Southbury Land Trust, Inc.